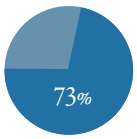
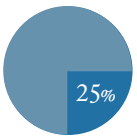
Hello Kitty

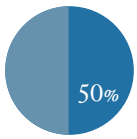
In the fall of 1922, a local merchant named Fay Evans sponsored a mascot-naming contest for the College, attracting nominations from students that ranged from "the domestic ram, merino type, to a polar bear." The most popular suggestions, though, fell into two categories: felines (bobcat, wild cat, lynx, catamount) and semi-aquatic natives (otter, beaver). The judges—President Paul Dwight Moody, football coach Arthur Brown, and Campus *Editor Eddy Kalin '23—selected, well, none of these. So how did the panther become our mascot?*



Percentage of NESCAC mascots that are animals



Percentage of these animals that can remotely be described as fierce



Panther winning percentage if it actually tussled with a polar bear (unscientific)

Lucky Bones

In 1924, a pair of "lucky bones"—taken from a black panther that was captured by a friend of the College while he was on safari in India—were crafted into a necklace by Tiffany & Co. and given to Middlebury President Paul Moody as a gift to be worn at sporting events.

33

Number of colleges and universities with a panther as a mascot

4

The panther's ranking, among all college and university mascots, in terms of popularity, trailing the bulldog, the tiger, and the eagle (in ascending order)

The Winner Is...

Contest judges Moody, Brown, and Kalin reported that the otter and beaver did not "appeal strongly," and while a feline had merits, not one of the four popular nominations met complete approval. So they came up with their own cat, settling on the black panther of India.

0

Number of black panthers that have ever roamed Vermont

Time for a Change?

A few years ago, Damon Hatheway '13.5 penned an op-ed column in the Campus in which he called for Middlebury to abandon the panther as a mascot and adopt the moose, instead. This idea didn't get much traction.

To catch a glimpse of the Middlebury Panther in action, check out go.middlebury.edu/closepanther.